

## Will the Wise by DoctorpooandtheTURDIS

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**Summary:**

On the night of November 6th, 1983, young Will Byers gets abducted, taken by a monster from his worst nightmares.

Now, stuck in a world unfamiliar to him, and teeming with strange life, Will is going to have to find his way home, by following the instructions of a book by an author long dead, and by learning the laws that this strange new world runs on-

Magic.

## 1. Taken

Will ran, his feet stomping the ground as he sprinted through the strange, almost familiar, yet alien world.

Dead trees littered the area around him, tendrils of death snaked across the ground, rooted deep in the earth. But those, those were not the strangest parts.

As Will ran through this waking nightmare, started when he was taken by a monster he couldn't predict nor run from, other things began to appear.

He passed by small gatherings of what appeared to be deer, only with eight legs and two sets of horns. Small wisps of light danced around in the air, much tinier fireflies swarming around the wisps. And nocturnal birds of some sort twittered endlessly.

The damndest thing, however, were the ruins of what looked like *castles* littering the place. Sure, most of it looked like his home, but all of it was subtly off.

As Will walked through the woods, trying to get back to his house, he stopped, seeing something he'd *never* expected to see. An *enormous* castle or palace, easily the size of a city block with dozens of little towers and battlements, poked out of where his house *should* have been. The place was entirely a polished white stone, and several of the towers had glowing symbols etched on the side.

Deciding that he'd find help there, Will pulled his jacket tight, and walked around to the front of the central tower.

Will knocked on the heavy oak door, waiting for an answer, and jumped with a start as something rustled behind him.

Turning around, Will saw the monster that took him, and wasted no time getting inside. He could apologize to the owners later, for now, he had to survive.

The monster screeched and leapt, its petaled face splitting open, but

as Will went to close the door, he could see the creature hit an invisible wall, a shimmering purple barrier rippling for a moment, before fading.

Will blinked. What was *with* this place?

Turning around, Will decided to get answers. “Hello?” He called out. “Is anyone here? My name is Will Byers, I need help!”

No answer came, and Will decided to seek it out. As he moved, he observed the place more closely. The building seemed to be an odd mix of modern buildings and what Will might expect to see in a medieval time. Wall sconces carried lightbulbs, suits of armor, weapons, and shields were placed about as décor. Power outlets on the wall were peppered about, and what looked like miniature stars or balls of endlessly burning fire hung suspended in the air where it would be too difficult to hang a light.

As Will moved, he heard what seemed to be... whispering. Almost like someone was right in his ear, but that wasn't quite right, because no one was that close, he knew. But it seemed to be... calling him. He found himself walking up the stairs, taking a path into a large, ornate library. Bookshelves decorated with gold accents took up the room in great pillars, no ladders or anything of the sort to get to the top levels. An enormous bronze telescope was supported in the center of the room by gigantic pivoting struts, under a glass dome that gave a perfect view of the night sky.

Walking further inside, Will heard the whispers intensify, as he began to see something around the corner glowing. He turned the corner to see a book on a lectern, shimmering with light.

Will approached the lectern, looking at the bound cover, and the metal symbol or crest stamped onto the front, what looked like a star rising over a planet's silhouette. The words ‘Encyclopedia Magicka’ were etched in English, inviting him to open it.

Curiously frowning, Will opened the book, finding it to be completely safe to touch, and opened it to page one.

*“Greetings wanderer. If you are reading this, then I am surely dead. My*

*name was once Will Byers...” Will read, breathing in awed confusion as he took in the words, written out by hand in lovely purple ink. “You are in my home. Or rather, what used to be my home. If you are here, then you are no doubt aware of the world outside. A place of death, disease, and decay. But it wasn’t always so. This world was once a place of life, teeming with all sorts of creatures. Dwarves ruled the underground, Elves ruled the skies, and Man ruled the Earth in between. Until it came. A creature with a name shrouded in shadow. Most called it the Enemy, but it doesn’t matter. All we know, is that it spelled our doom. Ancient stone crumbled under its heel, the living died as its shadow passed over them. All of us came together to push back against it, and most of us gave our lives. Even myself, I’ve been resigned to die a slow death, only for the Enemy to be weakened, not defeated. But you can change that. This castle has revealed itself to you for a reason. This world can be one of life and peace once again, with your help. The tomes in this place contain the knowledge of all the great scholars, their combined wisdom on the subject of Magic. Me and my people have lit the torch. It is up to you to carry it. I cannot expect you will wish to do so, but I know you are up for it, even if you do not. I know this, because I know you, Will.”*

Will gasped in surprise, double taking at his name, written plain as day, the book, or rather... the him that wrote it talking to him.

*“I’ve seen your world, Will, here, in my dying moments. The gift of Allsight has allowed me to see it, and know this: Your home is in grave danger by the same Enemy that destroyed mine. Your mother, your friends, every person you have known or loved. I know you are asking, why should you trust me? And I do not have an answer you will accept at this time. However, I also know you are a stranger to this land. Unfamiliar with the things here and the way this world works. You’re horribly scared, and I don’t blame you. But if you don’t do this, there won’t be a home for you to go back to, at least, not for long. You can do this, Will. In the back of this book are instructions for everything you’ll need to get started. Good luck, my friend.”*

“This is wild...” Will muttered to himself, stepping back from the book. He didn’t want to believe it, because after all, he knew that magic wasn’t real.

And yet, everything he had seen so far corroborated what he saw in the book. This world *wasn’t* his, filled with strange creatures and

monsters, magic wasn't out of the question.

Besides... it's not like he had an idea to get home on his own. So, Will stepped back to the book, and flipped past the part he'd read.

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*"Magics exist in all living things,"* The Mage had written in his book, giving the first task he'd said Will would need to complete, *"It creates life, and in turn, life generates it. It fills our universe, pooling in springs, birthing life itself. Some are naturally in tune with it, able to perform great feats under their own power, like the Fae, known to move continents when banded together. Humankind, however, is not one of these. Behind the Dwarves, Humans cannot use magics on their own. We're simply too... wily for it, our magics too unfocused to be of use. Hence, the Focusing Rods, or as most simply call them, Wands."*

Will stopped for a moment, reading back through to take it in, as he took a bite out of magically preserved food.

*"Before you can begin to learn Magicka, you must learn to focus it, or else, you will seriously injure, perhaps kill yourself. Your first duty will be to obtain a wand core. You will want to make this from wood, as wood is living matter, an excellent conductor of magical energy, but sturdy enough to take some punishment."*

"Wood..." Will looked up, out to the courtyard, seeing many trees. He didn't want to venture out with that... *thing* still out there, but that shimmering, barely perceptible barrier was further out, so he figured that he was still safe.

Still, he didn't dawdle, running across the courtyard, climbing up one of the ancient oaks with what seemed to be flecks of purple glitter in its bark, and he looked around.

His eyes wandered, looking for a stick that was small enough to comfortably hold, but not too small as to just break. As he searched, his eyes landed on one that seemed to be just... *perfect*. And so, he snapped it off, running back inside.

The book then instructed Will to whittle the stick into a uniform rod,

as to make it better at directing the power he'd be putting behind it, and Will obliged, looking at the fruits of his labor appreciatively, before turning back to the book.

*"Now, you're not done, not yet. You'll need a crystal, a quartz crystal. Now, unfortunately, I don't keep spares of those around here, the only place you'll be able to find them is the dwarven stronghold in what, to you, is Downtown Hawkins. There is a bag of holding somewhere in my tower, fill it with the enchanted food. The entrance to the stronghold will be... well, you'll know it when you see it. Once you get there, open the book back to this page. Good luck."*

Will blinked, gulping at the prospect of having to go back out into the dark on his own, but...

He *needed* that wand if he was going to go back home.

So, Will followed the book's instructions, grabbing a cloak that was labeled as able to keep the wearer comfortable no matter what the temperature, and set out, grabbing one of the torches with the miniature stars at the top, and he walked into the darkness...

## 2. Diggy Diggy Hole

*“Out of all the races of Gaia, the Dwarves were perhaps the most advanced. While Man and Elf studied and ruled the domain of magic, the Dwarves’ domain was the realm of science and technology. That is not to say the Dwarves did not use magic, rather, the Dwarves used magic to improve their technology, which they then used to improve their lives, as opposed to simply using magic to improve their lives directly. Indeed, the dwarves were creative in this way. They were carried in great metal ships that rode ribbons of light between planets, able to cross our star system in the blink of an eye.”*

Will stopped reading the passage for the moment, even stopping his movement, from sheer disbelief. “Dwarves were *spacefaring*?”

*“The Dwarves’ ingenuity was almost boundless. Great cities were built on the planets of our star system. Worlds of death, like Hermes, Aphrodite, and Ares, became new Garden Worlds. They tamed the skies of Zeus, Kronos, Poseidon, and Caelus. And they were well on their way to sharing it with all the races of Gaia.”*

“Okay...” Will muttered, as he began to walk again, approaching what *should* have been downtown Hawkins, but instead, was decidedly not. “The names of the planets were... obviously different here.”

It was a massive building on the surface, made of smooth, shining metal, glimmering like chrome. Small lines of light ran up the corners of the angular building, at least a decagon with the number of sides it had, and easily the size of a football stadium. Four prongs jutted up from the sides, darting off at right angles, before meeting above the center of the structure, a small light at the center acting like a beacon, calling out.

“So, what happened?” Will wondered, setting his sights on what could only be the Dwarven Stronghold, as he looked back to the book, searching for his answers.

*“Our Enemy came from far beyond the distant stars, with a strength and ferocity we couldn’t predict or defend against. It was a day like any other*

*for the Apollon System-“*

“Apollon?” Will blinked, “Is that what they call the Sun? Apollo? Not Sol?”

*“Until the Enemy appeared. It gave us no warning. The Dwarves were, of course, the first to detect it, but by then, it was far too late. It steamrolled every settlement we had, on every world. The entire Dwarven Stellar Prosperity Sphere fell in minutes, and then, the enemy came for Gaia, leaving only the Dwarves here an endangered species. With the most advanced technology defeated, it fell to the magic users to defend things. We put up a good fight for a long while, enough to weaken it, but it was not enough. In the end, we too fell, leaving only small pockets of our civilization, doomed to suffer in a dying world.”*

“Okay,” Will muttered to himself, “That took a quick turn...” He came to a stop outside an enormous blast door, shaped like a trapezoid, integrated into the wall of the stronghold’s exterior. “Now, how to get in?” He wondered.

The colored lines on this door, glowing a calm blue on the rest of the building, were red, presumably signaling that the door was locked. Searching for a keyhole or *something*, Will’s eyes were pulled around, before they stopped, being pulled to a small, metal post or pedestal nearby.

It was covered with those strange tendrils that grew over the rest of the land here, but as Will approached, it flickered to life, a ghostly image flashing into existence above it.

“No... way...” Will breathed, looking at the image. It was a hologram!

Okay, screw magic, he wanted to live with the Dwarves!

Examining the panel, Will saw a green, flashing box labeled ‘locked.’ Tapping that, it switched to ‘unlocked,’ and the door flashed, opening.

“...huh.” Will blinked. “You’d think it’d be harder than that...” He muttered to himself, going back to the book as he read.



*“One should take caution going into a Dwarven Stronghold, or any other abandoned place, for that matter.”* The book advised. *“It has been some time since I have taken in the state of the others, I do not know if they will be strictly welcoming, or-“*

Will jumped, as, behind him, the doors sealed shut with a heavy clang, and the lights inside turned on. The place was, in Will's opinion, quite sparse, served more to utility than anything else, though the small decorations hung around, like battle trophies, showed the Dwarves did have some pride to them.

*“Hello, Will Byers.”* A feminine voice, with an accent Will couldn't place, but kind of like a... Scottish Viking, came from the ceiling. *“It has been -one hundred- years since your last visit.”*

“Um...” Will looked around, helpless. “You know me?”

*“Of course, you were a close friend of the Royal Family.”* The Voice answered.

“O... Kay...” Will breathed. His double was a wizard... and a friend of the Dwarven Royal Family. Sure, why not? “Um, can we talk face-to-face, I'm kinda confused here.”

The voice, however, laughed. *“Oh my, what a wonderful joke! You know that isn't possible for an Ancillary Intelligence, such as myself!”*

“Ancillary Intelligence...” Will's eyebrows stitched together, before his eyes widened. “You're a computer?”

*“Yes!”* The Dwarven Computer giggled. *“I'm so glad you remembered! Allow me to reintroduce myself! I am Metra, a fully interactive, artificial consciousness, and the current custodian of the Deepwatch Stronghold!”*

Okay, if there was any doubt that these were actual Dwarves before, it was gone now. They integrated the word ‘deep’ into the name of one of their settlements, the others were all probably named after rocks and such.

“Okay, then, uh... Metra.” Will addressed awkwardly. “I need a Quartz crystal. Can you help me find that?”

*“Certainly!”* Metra replied happily. *“Many crystals were mined here, and cut within our walls!”*

“Okay, great.” Will smiled, “Where is it?”

*“You can find many crystals in the defunct mines, I’d start there! Allow me to fetch the lift!”* A door on the wall dinged, opening to allow Will access. *“Oh, and I’ll send word to the workers!”*

Will just only stepped inside, the door shutting, the lift engaging as he registered Metra’s words. “Wait, workers?”

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As the lift descended into the crust of the planet, Will could hear something occurring. What sounded like heavy drumbeats, clanging pickaxes, flutes, and electric guitars melded together in a harmony that effortlessly cut through the walls of the lift.

Then, as the lift descended, the transparent glass depolarized, allowing him to see out into an enormous mine, figures on every rocky outcropping, moving as one massive machine. They all wore heavy plate armor, ornate, angular helmets adorned with the horns of beasts alien and terrestrial, with thick beards falling from their strong jaws.

*“Born underground,”* The line of dwarves chorused as one, keeping working with the music, *“Grown inside a rocky womb! The Earth is the cradle, the mountain shall become our tomb! Face us on the battlefield, you will meet your doom! We do not fear what lies beneath, we can never dig too deep! I am a dwarf and I’m digging a hole, diggy diggy hole, diggy diggy hole! I am a Dwarf and I’m digging a hole, diggy diggy hole, digging a hole!”*

“Dwarf music...” Will noted with a laugh. “I don’t know what I expected!”

*“I am a dwarf and I’m digging a hole, diggy diggy hole, diggy diggy hole! I am a Dwarf and I’m digging a hole, diggy diggy hole, digging a hole! I am a dwarf and I’m digging a hole, diggy diggy hole, diggy diggy hole! I am a Dwarf and I’m digging a hole, diggy diggy hole, digging a hole!”*

The lift stopped, the doors dinging as Will stepped out. "Hello!"

Instantly, the music stopped, all Dwarves looking at him. After a few tense moments of silence, will blinked, gulping.

"You guys wouldn't happen to have some Quartz I could borrow... would you?" Will smiled awkwardly.

" ... "

"...I just made a colossal mistake, haven't I?"